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LETTER DATED 8 JULY 1991 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Upon instructions from my Government and pursuant to our letter of 11 June 1991 (S/22690), and with reference to documents S/22699 and S/22728 containing respectively the letter of Chargé d'affaires, a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations and the Foreign Minister of Iraq, I have the honour to put the following on record.

The people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran share the grave concern of the international community over the dangers facing a significant portion of the Iraqi population, most recently in southern Iraq. The announcement by the spokesman of the Secretary-General on 3 July 1991 that, according to an investigation conducted by a United Nations team, 30,000 to 100,000 Iraqi civilians have been under Iraqi military siege in Hour al-Hammar has further illustrated the fact that international concerns voiced in the past few months have been very much justified. Furthermore, according to the information available to the Islamic Republic of Iran many more face similar imminent danger in other marshlands of southern Iraq. In this context, the decision by the United Nations to dispatch a high-level delegation to Iraq to safeguard the very lives of these innocent civilians is a belated but welcome and necessary step.

It is indeed unfortunate that, in response to the well-founded expressions of concern by my Government and many others, the Iraqi authorities have resorted to baseless allegations and assertions against my country in documents S/22699 and S/22728, which regrettably go outside the norms of international conduct and even contain unacceptable threats, reminiscent of the propaganda waged by Iraq prior to its aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran on 22 September 1980. The Government of Iraq should be reminded that, while this tactic may have some utility in diverting, temporarily, the attention of a few, truth finally manifests itself as it has in this case and the case of Iraq's aggression against my country.

The Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be committed to its policy of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others. It would be well-advised for the Government of Iraq to cease its hostile words and deeds directed against the Islamic Republic of Iran, designed to find external justifications for its internal problems and behaviour, and instead halt the actions and policies that have given rise to serious international concern over the fate of innocent Iraqi civilians.

I will be grateful if this letter is circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) M. Javad ZARIF
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative